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16TH DISTRICT, OHIO

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TAX POLICY

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3516

September 6, 2018

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Secretary Sonny Perdue
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

I write in support of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Notice published on August 15, 2018 to explore options to move the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and the Economic Research Service (ERS). Moving these agencies outside Washington D.C. is a prudent step in ensuring that these agencies are able to properly serve the farming community, attract and retain employees, and save taxpayer dollars.

The state of Ohio is home to a robust agricultural economy which is a major producer of dairy, corn, soybeans, pork, and various other agricultural products. Having these agencies more closely located to every day farmers and other stakeholders would strengthen their ability to fulfill their core missions. Additionally, the state boasts a low cost of living while also containing populated city centers throughout the state. In fact, a recent US News & World Report Ranking, Ohio was rated as the most affordable state in the country due to its low cost of living and the affordability of housing. I believe that Ohio meets and exceeds the goals for a new site selection for ERS and NIFA and strongly encourage the consideration of applications from the state.

Moving these important agencies outside of Washington should include careful consideration of where NIFA and ERS will be relocated to best meet the three stated reasons for moving to a new location. With this Notice being published on August 15, 2018, I am concerned that stakeholders will not have sufficient time to submit Expressions of Interest for review by the September 14, 2018 deadline. Accordingly, I ask that you extend the time period by 30 additional days for state and local governments, industry, academia, interested parties and organizations to have more time to submit Expressions of Interest.

I thank you again for your commitment to ensuring that government agencies are accountable to the American people. Thank you for your attention to this letter and please contact my office if you need any further information.

Sincerely,



Jim Renacci
Member of Congress